

Each PRO deck is customized to a specific public safety industry. This one is for EMS. If you don't have the EMS deck, these instructions are going to be very confusing!

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What is ExDecks PRO™?

ExDecks™ is a series of cards designed to prompt discussion around a variety of emergency scenarios. Any number of incidents can happen at any moment without prior warning and seemingly at random. Organizers may also choose to draw certain cards deliberately to build specific scenarios in order to address certain topics.

Due to the simple yet detailed nature of ExDecks™, participants can build complete scenarios in seconds; leaving more time to discuss, learn, and analyze response plans. Thanks to the speed at which a scenario can be built, it is now easier than ever to integrate these critical discussions into weekly routines or during shift briefing sessions.

www.ExDecks.com



EMS INSTRUCTIONS

GETTING STARTED - Introduction

Welcome and thank you for your ExDecks PRO™ purchase. We hope you find this deck to be a valuable asset to your training program. ExDecks™ is designed to be flexible and adaptable for any organization or training need. The cards in this deck should prompt meaningful discussion around how your agency and crews would respond to the events and details presented.

Questions? Please do not hesitate to reach out to us at Support@ContinuumPreparedness.com. We aim to do everything we can to ensure you have a great experience with our products.

DECK COMPONENTS - "What's in the box?!"



MISSION AREA CARDS

These cards are optional and can help frame your discussion within various contexts, enabling you to address strategies outside the comfort zone of Response. If you'd like to focus on a certain category, you may choose a specific card.



CAPABILITY CARDS

These cards are optional and can help focus the discussion on a specific, common capability. These discussions can become cumbersome, so limiting them to a specific capability can allow for a deeper dive without spending hours on one scenario.



LOCATION CARDS + PURPLE DIE

These cards explain where the scenario is occurring. After rolling the die and pulling a "Location Card," you can verbally identify an actual location within your jurisdiction to use for the scenario. Discuss the approach and tactics, potential hazards, required resources, and overall strategy for responding to this location. If you don't have such a location within your jurisdiction, consider responding to a mutual aid request in a neighboring jurisdiction that does.



The **6-sided die** included with these cards (matching purple color) should be rolled before a card is drawn. The die determines a location sub-category for the card drawn.



DETAIL: TIME OF DAY CARDS

These should be pretty straightforward but just in case...These optional cards identify the time of day when the scenario begins. Various times could mean different resources are available and could also present a variety of challenges (rush hour traffic, darkness, etc.)



DETAIL: WEATHER CARDS

These optional cards identify weather conditions during the scenario. If a weather event doesn't make sense for your area, you can discard it or work through the scenario anyways. Just because it isn't likely, doesn't mean it'll never happen (it can snow in the desert!)



SCENARIO CARDS + RED DIE

These cards are the fun part and are possibly the only card that is actually required for exercise play. The "Scenario Card" explains what it is you're being dispatched to and what you encounter upon arrival. Discuss the approach and tactics, potential hazards, required resources, and overall strategy for handling the incident.



The **6-sided die** included with these cards (matching red color) should be rolled before a card is drawn. The die determines scenario details for the card drawn. Rolling first helps reduce bias.



INJURY CARDS

Certain "Scenario Cards" may call for you to draw one or more "Injury Cards." We've included 15 basics with the deck. Discuss how your crew would address these injuries if they are included in your scenario. Discuss the pathophysiology, treatments, required resources, and overall strategy for managing an incident involving these injuries.



VITALS CARDS

With few exceptions, patients identified on "Scenario Cards" will call for you to draw a "Vitals Card." "Vitals Cards" are Green, Yellow, and Red corresponding to patient condition. Discuss the pathophysiology, seriousness of condition, treatments, required resources, and overall strategy for patient management.



COMPLICATION CARDS + ORANGE DIE

Incidents rarely go 100% according to plan. You may choose to draw an optional "Complication Card" at any time in your scenario discussion. You may choose more than one if you really want to make things difficult. They may be drawn at various times during the discussion for realism.



The **4-sided die** included with these cards (matching orange color) should be rolled before a card is drawn. The die determines which specific issue you will have within the card category drawn. Rolling first helps reduce bias.

THE “RULES” - *More like optional guidelines*

THE BASICS

As with any exercise, rules should be established in advance. Things to consider may include: limits for the discussion, duration of the exercise, and what to do should an actual emergency occur during the simulated incident.

The exercise should have clearly specified goals for the group to accomplish. Common goals for discussion-based exercises include, but are not limited to: share or determine operating procedures, identify best practices, test plans or procedures, identify resource or knowledge gaps, and build relationships. Determine your goals prior to the exercise and communicate those goals to all participants before beginning the scenario.

The exercise should be fun and engaging. Everyone has something to contribute and the environment should foster open collaboration. There are no right answers. Conversations should center around group problem solving and reaching solutions that are reasonable given all available information and resources.


DRAWING CARDS

You should select only the cards that make sense for your organization. Feel free to remove cards in advance. The only two card categories that are “required” are 1 Scenario Card (and cards related to the scenario, such as Injury and Vitals cards) and 1 Location Card. The rest are optional but add depth, realism, and challenges to the discussion. If the card has a dice image on the bottom right corner (Scenario Cards, Location Cards, and Complication Cards), roll the dice of the corresponding color prior to drawing a card in that series. The number on the dice determines additional details for your scenario that are printed on the back of the card.

Discussion can happen as cards are drawn or after all cards are drawn, depending on time and training goals.

GAME PLAY

We generally suggest that cards are pulled in the following order; however, you can start simple and add in additional details later (i.e. “Now, let’s say it’s snowing, how would that change what we’re talking about here?”).

1. Draw 1 Mission Area Card (*at random or select one that aligns with your training goals*)
2. Draw 1 Capability Card (*at random or select one that aligns with your training goals*)
3. Roll the red 6-sided die and draw 1 Scenario Card (*at random*)
 - 3.1. Some Scenario Cards call for specific Location Cards to be drawn. If that is the case with the Scenario Card you draw, draw the prescribed Location Card and roll the purple 6-sided die for your location details.
 - 3.2. If your Scenario Card calls for Injury Cards to be drawn, draw the indicated number of Injury Cards. The number of Injury Cards to draw is indicated with this symbol: 
 - 3.3. Your Scenario Card will have color-code the word patient (**patient**, **patient**, **patient**). For each patient involved in the scenario, draw the matching colored Vitals Card.
4. Roll the purple 6-sided die and draw 1 Location Card (*at random*)
5. Draw 1 Time of Day Card and 1 Weather Card (*optional*)
6. Draw 1 Complication Card (*optional*)

WHAT IF SOMETHING DOESN'T MAKE SENSE? - *Yeah, it could happen.*

Listen. When developing an innovative training tool for a complex industry that operates in every corner of the country, it's tough to apply a "one-size fits all" solution. We've thoroughly tested the mechanics of this deck and the scenarios tend to work out.

That said, **there are over 800,000,000 scenario combinations in this deck** (yes, really!) so there are bound to be a few that don't quite work. When that happens, you have a few options.

For one, you can work through it anyway and push the team to discuss: "well what **would** we do in this case?" Worst case you still have a productive discussion about your team's resources, capabilities, and approach to problem solving. The other option is to simply draw different cards that make more sense for your unique operations.

We would, however, push you just a little bit to consider some of the possibilities. Say you are a rural agency and drew a card for a motor vehicle collision on large highway. What about a mutual aid request from a neighboring jurisdiction? What about rolling up on something on the way back from the hospital? It might still not work out but thinking and talking through these things are part of the learning benefits of ExDecks™. We've all been on calls that we never could have imagined.

HAVE IDEAS? - *Let us know*

We're always open to new ideas and feedback. If you have an idea for an expansion pack, a new card, or something else, let us know. If we make your card or expansion pack a reality, we'll send you one for free and give you and your department a shout-out. Just email us at **Support@ContinuumPreparedness.com**.

CONVERSATION STARTERS - *Just a few ideas to get the ball rolling*

MISSION AREA

We always talk response. Which makes sense because we're responders. When is the last time you sat down with your people and talked about preparedness or recovery? If you decide to use the Mission Area cards, you're in for an experience as you wrangle everyone into a different mindset. Use these discussion points to help:

1. Preparedness Mission Area

- 1.1. Do we have the right or enough training for this incident?
- 1.2. Do we have the right or enough equipment for this incident?
- 1.3. Do we know the location well enough? Could we know it better?
- 1.4. Who can we partner with ahead of time for an incident like this?

2. Response Mission Area

- 2.1. What are our standard procedures/plans for this incident?
- 2.2. Who will be in command during this incident?
- 2.3. Where will the patient(s) be transported?

3. Recovery Mission Area

- 3.1. What responsibilities do we have to support recovery?
- 3.2. What resources are available for us to activate?

CONVERSATION STARTERS - *Continued*

CAPABILITIES

Want to keep the discussion focused? Pull a Capability card or two. The idea behind capabilities-based exercises is that we can hone our skills and find our gaps in areas that impact every call. Whether it's a structure fire or a water rescue, we always communicate, coordinate, maintain situational awareness, and manage our equipment.

1. Operational Communication

- 1.1. What are our overall communications strategies/procedures?
- 1.2. What communications equipment do we have?
- 1.3. What radio channels do we use? When do we use them?
- 1.4. What interoperable communications do we have? When do we use them?
- 1.5. When and how would we communicate with the hospital or medical direction?
- 1.6. How would we communicate in this specific scenario?

2. Operational Coordination

- 2.1. What are our overall command and coordination strategies/procedures?
- 2.2. Who is in command of this specific incident?
- 2.3. How are people assigned to tasks? Who maintains accountability for assignments?
- 2.4. How do we interact with other agencies and organizations?

3. Situational Awareness

- 3.1. Who stands back and maintains a common operating picture?
- 3.2. Who is responsible for monitoring the safety of the scene and responders?
- 3.3. How do we account for all of the people, resources, and tasks on scene?
- 3.4. How are we reassessing the incident? Who is responsible for doing so?
- 3.5. How are we keeping everyone updated?

4. Logistics Management

- 4.1. What resources and equipment are needed?
- 4.2. What resources and equipment are available? How do we know?
- 4.3. Are there other agencies or organizations that can help us or provide resources and equipment?
- 4.4. How do we find out receiving hospital status? What if the hospital is on divert?

Common Discussion Points

Here are some basic questions to help get everyone talking, regardless of the scenario. Use as many or as few of these as you like, but remember that a good discussion is one that follows an organic flow. Keep everyone focused, but sometimes it's good to let them lead you; you'll be surprised at what you may learn.

1. What do we need to do before we leave the station?
2. What apparatus/teams should go on this call?
3. What PPE should we don?
4. What should we do while responding? What discussions might we have on the way to the scene?
5. What will we do immediately upon arrival? Who will be in command? What tasks will be assigned?
6. Do we need more resources? If so, which? Where will we get them? How will they be activated?
7. Are there any specific actions that need to be taken because of the time, weather, or location?
8. Where can we find more information about the location, patient, etc.?
9. Are there tasks that must be performed before we can leave the scene?
10. What would your call-in and hand-off reports include? Run through them.
11. What documentation is required for the incident? Who is responsible for completing it?
12. What follow-up to the incident is required? Will an after-action debrief or report be completed?
13. What did we learn from this discussion? Is there equipment, training, etc. that would be helpful if this happened for real?

HOUSE RULES - *Make it your own*

It's your house, do it the way you want. ExDecks™ isn't designed to be prescriptivist. We want you to get what you need out of it. Don't want to use Mission Area cards, no problem. Don't want to include the Blizzard card, no problem. Want to stack the deck to throw your people a can-o-corn or a knuckleball? Go for it! Come up with whatever rules you want, but if you're not that creative, here are some ideas:

GET REAL!

Who wants to sit around talking?! Throw the cards down, then head out to the rig, strap-in, and drill. Mental preparedness is essential to our success, but so is muscle memory. Get out there and do CPR, intubate a manikin, start an IV, pull traction, mix an infusion, or play with the radios!

DEVIL IN THE DETAILS

Help everyone gain an understanding of how details change the call. An Altered Mental Status in a nursing home presents different challenges than one in a motel or one during a heatwave.

1. Pick a Scenario card at random or choose a specific Scenario.
2. Pick multiple Location, Weather, or Time cards.
3. Discuss the differences in responding to the incident based on differences in Location, Weather, or Time.
4. To make the scenario more specific, pick a Scenario and Location and work through multiple Weather and Time cards.
5. Be sure to discuss the implications of the changing details in depth. A Cardiac Arrest at 18:00 probably has a short down-time, but one at 6:00 could have been there all night.

TRUCK CHECK

Don't deal with this Scenario often? Sounds like everyone could use a refresher on the equipment. After pulling your cards, pull out the appropriate equipment and go over it. Is it all there, is it all working, do we all know how to use it? Couple this with a full discussion, or spend the time on tactile skills, the decision is up to you.

FLYING SOLO

Sometimes group decisions are best. They take into account different points of view, different skill sets, and preferences. That's not always a good thing, though. Instead of having everyone discuss as a group, pull the cards and have each person formulate their plan solo and write it down on a piece of paper. You might give everyone five minutes, or you might lay it out in the morning and expect everyone to have their plans ready by afternoon. Have everyone share their plan with the group and discuss the differences. This gives everyone a chance to be heard and you might just learn a new way of managing the incident.

PATIENT PROGRESSION

Want to keep it going or do a real-time scenario? No problem! After working your way through the first round of assessments, decisions, and treatments, draw another vitals card of the same color. If you want to simulate the patient getting better or worse, draw a card of a different color. For example: We've treated the yellow patient and he's looking better; let's draw a green Vitals Card. We've treated the yellow patient, but the treatments weren't great; draw a red Vitals Card. Progress until you "arrive at the hospital".

MINIMALIST

Don't have much time or not looking to get into a deep discussion? Keep it simple. Just pull a scenario card and have an informal talk about how you would handle it. This is a good one for when you're posted up in that desolate parking lot.